



Joint Information Center - JIC Release No. 667
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**Six COVID-19 Cases with Variants of Concern Identified on Guam;
Community Reminded to Practice Caution**

Today, the Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) received an additional set of results from virus samples collected on Guam which have undergone genome sequencing by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Virus samples were collected between March 2021 and April 2021. To date, a total of 86 SARS-CoV-2 virus samples have been submitted to the CDC for genome sequencing.

DPHSS received the third set of results from the CDC on May 12. Of the seven (7) results, six (6) were Variants of Concern: four (4) were identified as B.1.1.7 or the U.K. variant, one (1) was identified as the B.1.429 or California variant, and one (1) was identified as the B.1.351 or the South African variant. The B.1.351, or the South African variant, is considered a more highly transmissible variant of SARS-CoV-2 and significantly decreases susceptibility to certain combination monoclonal antibody treatment for COVID-19.

Of the six samples confirmed as Variants of Concern, five (5) were identified in the government of Guam quarantine facility (QFAC), and one (1) had no known travel history. In accordance with DPHSS protocol, the five (5) travelers were isolated in the government isolation facility, and all close contacts to these travelers were quarantined at the QFAC for 14 days.

DPHSS received the first set of results on March 19 from the CDC, which confirmed seven (7) of 26 samples identified the B.1.429 California Variant. On May 3, the second set of results confirmed three (3) of four (4) samples identified the B.1.1.7 Variant from the United Kingdom. This brings a total of 16 confirmed variants from samples collected on Guam that have been identified by the CDC. Upon additional case assessment, it has been verified that none of the patients who tested positive with the variants were fully immunized with the COVID-19 vaccine.

Current results do not provide any evidence of the other Variants of Concern on Guam (P.1--Brazil/Japan, B.1.427--a California Variant of Concern). DPHSS continues to send samples to the CDC for genome sequencing.

The community is reminded to remain vigilant:

- Wear your mask. Wash your hands. Watch your distance.
- Get vaccinated. Stay tuned to local media and the latest JIC releases for vaccine availability.
- Stay home if you are sick, keep away from others who are sick.
- Keep a safe distance of at least 6 feet from others who are not in your household.
- Practice social distancing around elderly family members.

For the latest information on COVID-19, visit dphss.guam.gov or guamrecovery.com. For inquiries on COVID-19, contact 311 through a local number, or call the Joint Information Center at (671) 478-0208/09/10.

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